Finally, a review of the acoustics:

*** 414. 2 Oct 80 DMN (Golz) "New JFK acoustical study funded"
*** 415. 3 Oct 80 DMN (Golz) "Assassinations panel chief blasts Justice Dept."
** 416. 7 Oct 80 AP in SFC, on Stokes' announcement of the study

From #414: "A National Science Foundation grant of $23,360 for a 4-month study by the National Academy of Sciences is the' first preliminary step' toward the possibility of reopening the probe, a JD spokesman said.... FBI agents last month reviewed a sharply critical report written by Dallas Police Capt. James C. Bowles,... a police communications supervisor at the time of the assassination [who] said he was asked to serve as a technical consultant in the JD's study. Bowles said his report 'will destroy this canard they call' acoustical evidence. He claimed specifically that the high frequency of shots could not be transmitted through the 'voice grade' low-frequency radio system.... [The current study does not deal with the Bronson film.] ... The NSF announcement Monday [10/6] will state that an ad hoc committee will be formed to review the 'methodology ... and the rationale for the conclusions' presented by acoustics experts.... For the first phase of a proposed 2-part study, the ad hoc committee will hold a 3-day workshop. The panel will report its findings by the end of January to the speaker of the House ... and to the Justice Department. The JD will then decide whether a follow-up study will be approved to prepare a report recommending 'the kinds of tests, analyses and evaluations needed to get better information from the Dictabelt recording and to evaluate the evidence gleaned from it,' a science foundation statement said. 'Among the things the committee will seek more information about is the background noise. ... It has been indicated the properties of that background noise are not consistent with the noise of a motorcycle.' The follow-up study would include a second, longer workshop."

From #415: "[Blakey] accused the [JD] of 'burying' the conspiracy findings because 'they want this thing to die.' 'It's almost diabolical ... There's no way they can say we did a good job and nothing else has to be done and we were right.' Blakey referred to the upcoming evaluation as no more than 'a great study of a study.' ... 'It is outrageous what they are doing. They have put it in a process that is guaranteed to raise questions about it. No scientist worth his salt is ever going to come in and say everything is perfect. The typical way that scientists do things is to find things that are wrong.... The ball ... will be back in the Congress' lap and the JD will have gotten out from under it entirely, and nothing else is going to be done about it - a conspiracy to kill my President and yours. And for reasons that wholly escape me, people don't want to investigate it further'."

In real life, $23,360 is real money - you could hire 3 competent professionals for 4 months on that. By Washington grant standards, it's not much at all. (The standard consulting fee plus per diem is about $225 per day, I am told.) I expect to find out soon just what, if anything, beyond the 3-day workshop this grant will pay for. I wonder how many federal grants are this small?

Our Dallas station will be requested to try to get the Bowles report. The question of the ability of the DPD system to pick up a gunshot was, of course, dealt with by Barger. [See 8 HSC 122-5.] Of course, he did not have McLain's radio to work with, and concluded simply that the signals looked enough like the test shots so that this screening test did not rule out the possibility that the signals represented gunshots. [8 HSC 77] If Bowles has done a better job, I'll be quite surprised. [10 Oct 80]

The Meagher-Owens indexes:

Now available: "Master Index to the J.F.K. Assassination Investigations," by Sylvia Meagher, in collaboration with Gary Owens. Available for $20 plus $1.25 postage from Scarecrow Press, P.O. Box 656, Metuchen, NJ 08840.

Everyone who has the HSC volumes should buy this book. There is a nice little introductory essay by Russ Stetler [2 pp., ask for #417.] This is followed by indexes to the individual volumes, which many of you already have in draft form. Then there is a cumulative subject index (pp. 174-233), and a cumulative name index (pp. 234-302). A key to names lists individuals in 38 categories, including known HSCA witnesses in non-public sessions (pp. 304-338). The final section is a

reprint of Sylvia's 1966 index to the 26 volumes.

Word has reached us of the recent death of Thomas Stamm, one of the original generation of Warren Report critics. Stamm lived in New York and was, I believe, in his seventies. In September 1965, he was one of the first people outside the government to actually see the Zapruder film (at the Archives). His vivid and graphic description of the head snap was quoted (in 1967) in the Lifton-Welsh Ramparts article and at length in "Accessories." It is hard to recall how slowly we were uncovering the evidence buried in the chaos of the 26 volumes; it was Stamm's writing which first brought this important point to the attention of many of us. I did not personally know him - we corresponded briefly after he vigorously disputed the 'jet effect' hypothesis - but I was impressed by his dedication and concern for the truth; his passing is sad news.

Eddowes - down but not out:

* 418. 5 Sep 80 FWST [2 pp.] "Widow of Oswald believes his grave may be empty" But she's sure LHO was buried there. Eddowes, "the aging, hearing-impaired Briton," also testified.

* 419. 6 Sep 80 DMN on Marina's testimony, Petty's comments, etc. Marina said that if Eddowes is right, "then my children and I are illegal aliens." I wonder where Marina is getting her legal advice. From the people who convinced her to approve the exhumation, perhaps?

* 420. 7 Sep 80 DMN (Golz) [2 pp.] "Brother considered exhumation" two days after the burial; Fire Marshall Lankford suggested it. Quotes Robert's book, Lankford, undertaker Groody. Marguerite requested exhumation in 1967 because of the wrist scars issue. WC deliberations discussed.

421. 9 Sep 80 DMN; "Decision delayed on exhumation" and (on the same page) 11 Sep 80 FWST; "Another Oswald hearing possible"

422. 11 Sep 80 AP in Cleburne Times-Review Robert's lawyer denies that the judge has urged an out-of-court settlement.

* 423. 16 Sep 80 FWST; "Ex-prober [Blakey] says Oswald grave flap irrelevant" "People who see things like this going on will say that critics of the WC are all a bunch of nuts. I'll grant you, a large percentage of them are, but in light of our scientific work, not all of them are.... This kind of publicity ... does a disservice to the American people."

* 424. 18 Sep 80 DMN (Parks) "Probe aides deride furor over Oswald" Comments by Blakey and Michael Goldsmith, now a visiting law prof at Vanderbilt [!]. Handwriting, fingerprint, and anthropological evidence cited.

425. 20 Sep 80 DMN; "Effort to exhume Oswald blocked" by temporary injunction.

426. 20 Sep 80 FWST; "Judge prevents Oswald exhumation for now" Judge Wright "attempted to assuage" Marina's fears about her citizenship status, noting absence of evidence that the government would question it.

427. 20 Sep 80 UP in SFC; "Judge stops plan to open Oswald grave" (Page 1 again!)

428. 21 Sep 80 SFC; review of an Irving Wallace novel, "The Second Lady." The Russkis send over a lady KGB agent who looks just like the President's wife, see, to pick up some hot secrets over pillow talk, but she doesn't

"know how to sexually perform with the President - that one tantalizing detail even the KGB can't find out." The reviewer liked the book, but as far as I can tell this Eddowesian theme doesn't even make plausible fiction.

429. 23 Sep 80 DMN; "Oswald appeal would take 3-4 months"

430. 2 Oct 80 DMN; "Oswald appeal planned" by Eddowes. Wowie, fans.

* 431. 23 May 60 FBI airtel, NY to HQ, from the Oswald file. This is item 13 in the FBI listing of the pre-assassination file (CE 834). That CE says the airtel "sets forth results of an interview with Marguerite" re Oswald's plans to attend Schweitzer College." That is not correct; the airtel simply refers to that interview. The substance is to raise the impostor possibility: "There appears to be a possibility of locating Lee Oswald outside the USSR at [Schweitzer College]. Furthermore, since Oswald had his birth certificate in his possession, another individual may have assumed his identity." The NY office then suggests furnishing the interview of Mrs. Oswald (in the Fain report of 5/12/60) to the State Department.

This, then, is the document behind the impostor memo initialed by Hoover. There is no indication why NY ("HFG," specifically) raised the impostor hypothesis. It has occurred to me that the idea may have originated in the CIA - CIA people seem more likely to think of something like this, and the FBI in NY may have been in touch with the CIA people operating the mail intercept program (especially the FBI agents working on Funds Transmitted to Residents of Russia cases). Has anyone looked at the NY files?

I've had this document for some time, and it doesn't really interest me, but any Eddowes scholars out there might want a copy. [10 Oct 80]

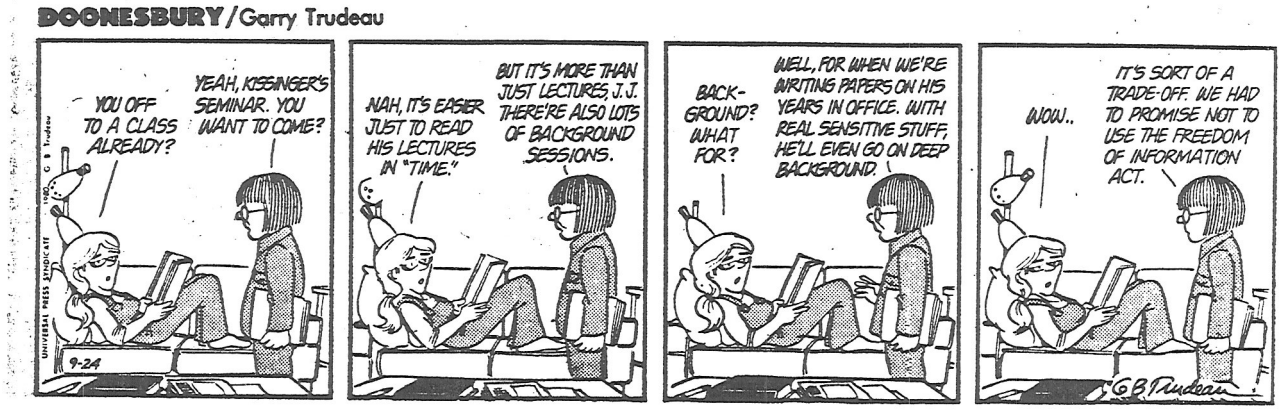
Eddowes and the fingerprints: A good newspaper story on the Eddowes hypothesis is one which at least mentions the HSC's rebuttal, including the fingerprint match. Typically, this observation is balanced by a report of Eddowes claim that the KGB switched the prints. I haven't seen any detailed analysis of that possibility. I'm sure there are people around who know enough about how the KGB operates to give an informed opinion of this part of Eddowes' theory. Is there another case on record in which the KGB switched prints in anyone's files? When an impostor (or 'illegal') is sent over by one side or the other, isn't it usual practice to provide just enough documentation to get by with, and to count on the impostor staying out of the hands of the police?

I forced myself to read the section of Eddowes' book dealing with the fingerprint evidence, and it's even worse than I thought. He theorizes that the switch was made after Oswald left the U.S., but before his first visit to the Embassy in Moscow on October 31, 1959. (The constraint comes from Eddowes' belief that the 'real' [Marine] Oswald was not a KGB agent; and because Eddowes seems to accept as authentic some of the 1959 notations on the FBI's fingerprint card.) So, his theory requires that over a period of about five weeks, the KGB learned about Oswald's impending defection, decided that they wanted to return an impostor, & located someone who could carry out the desired mission (shoot whoever would be elected President in 1960, I suppose). They could find someone who looked enough like Oswald to pass, but they couldn't find someone just the right height. Then they found out what fingerprint card was in the FBI's file, got an authentic copy (or a reasonably good forgery) of the blank card, added the prints of their man, forged the Marine Corps notations, and decided to risk exposing their man in the FBI by having him switch cards. I don't know if Eddowes thinks they also fixed any references to the Oswald card in the FBI files. I guess Eddowes can believe all that if he wants to.

As Blakey has said, anyone who believes, given the current evidence, that Oswald was a KGB impostor isn't going to be satisfied by a dental X-ray comparison. Couldn't the KGB have switched the dental X-rays too? For that matter, maybe they killed the real Oswald and switched bodies in the grave at some time since 1963.

If anyone can figure out what keeps getting Eddowes all this publicity, let me know; some of us could use it. Is it simply a matter of having something in court, to be kicked around for a few years? [12 Oct 80]

Clippings:




432. 7 Sep 80 WP "New system ['royal' classification] tightly curbs access to intelligence"

** 433. 15 Sep 80 WP [3 pp.] "Out in the cold" (Christian Williams on Frank Snepp)

Snepp says he's not "radicalized. There is a society of whistleblowers here in Washington, but I'm too conservative for them." He still feels like a member of the CIA, Williams says, but the feeling is no longer mutual.

When he was writing his Vietnam book, his girlfriend still worked for the CIA. "The funny thing is," Snepp reports, that "she told them my publisher was Random House, which was what they needed to know if they were going to stop publication. They didn't believe her." CIA documents (1976-77, quoted here) "lend credence to his claim." That is, a 1976 memo specifies Random House, and a 1977 memo says the publisher is unknown. Funny thing indeed.

Snepp's current project is a novel, "Convergence of Interests," which "turns on the old question of whether there was a CIA operative involved in the [Kennedy] assassination." It has been submitted to the CIA for approval, "and the CIA has already embarrassed itself by ordering a name out that it had previously approved in another manuscript, and then having to change its order to a 'request'." Good publicity. "Because of the massive legal problems involved, it [the novel] needs a veneer of fiction," Snepp says.

I guess I should be openminded about this novel, at least until it comes out. But "timeo Danaos, et dona ferentes." (Beware of spooks bearing gifts.) I do like the title, however.

434. 15 Sep 80 WP; Photo of Snepp, accompanying the above article.
435. 19 Sep 80 WP; John Shattuck (ACLU) argues against the CIA names bill
436. 19 Sep 80 WS; Sirhan's sentence reduced - he could be out in September 1984
437. 22 Sep 80 WP (Jack Anderson) "Soviets believe US will invade Iran" according to very secret NSA intercepts
438. 27 Sep 80 AP in LAT; "Sirhan lays killing to liquor, anger"

* 439. 28 Sep 80 NYT Mag. [8 pp.] "The Spy War," by Edward Jay Epstein. Mentions Trianon, Goleniewski, de Vosjoli, NSA defections, Dunlap, Whalen, et al. There may be interesting new information, but it's hard for me to tell.

440. 28 Sep 80 4 pp. of photos accompanying #439 (including cover drawing)
441. 2 Oct 80 Oakland Tribune, p. 5; AP report on the DMN story on the acoustics (#414), with no additional info. At least the story got on the wire; someone who reads the Washington papers told me that it wasn't mentioned!
442. 3 Oct 80 E. Bay Express [2 pp.] Interview with head of Oakland FBI office.
443. 6 Oct 80 Inquiry [3 pp.] Hentoff on a libel case in Ohio which seems to make it difficult to argue that a court's finding is in error.
444. 6 Oct 80 Inquiry [2 pp.] Carl Oglesby's review of Todd Gitlin's book on SDS.

Clippings from the S.F. Chronicle:

445. 5 Sep 80 (Jack Anderson) On Filatov (Trianon) & the Dobrynin-Kissinger story
446. 12 Sep 80 (From NYT) "Cuban envoy killed [by Omega 7] in N.Y. ambush"
447. 14 Sep 80 Bob Kaiser (NYT) on new film on Hiss case.

448. 14 Sep 80 [2 pp.] "Defense to aim at deflating mob informer" (Fratianno)
449. 15 Sep 80 [3 pp.] Warren Hinckle on an erroneous 1940 mob killing conviction; Fratianno supposedly has named the actual killer.
450. 19 Sep 80 (AP) "A hot debate at FBI conspiracy [Felt-Miller] trial"
* 451. 21 Sep 80 (Coates, Chic. Trib.) [2 pp.] "[NSC] memo says Billy [Carter] met with figure linked to mob [Irving Davidson]"
452. 24 Sep 80 (Kantor) "CIA note on [Jesse Jackson and] Libya"
453. 24 Sep 80 (UP) "[Senate Intell. Comm.] looking into a strange spy story" (Filatov)
454. 25 Sep 80 (UP) "Agent claims FBI had spy inside Weather underground"
455. 28 Sep 80 (AP) "Castro angry at Venezuela" after acquittal of Orlando Bosch in airliner bombing case.
456. 29 Sep 80 (AP) "A flap over 'nepotism' in Energy Dept." An internal report says Deanne Siemer apparently violated federal nepotism laws in her efforts on behalf of J. Willens. There is a serious illness in her family, and she has been replaced.
457. 1 Oct 80 (UP) "More FBI burglaries of Arab offices [in 1972] revealed"
458. 1 Oct 80 (AP) "House passes CIA watchdog bill"
459. 2 Oct 80 (Fogarty, SFC) Story of Bonanno informant Louis Peters [2 pp.]
460. 2 Oct 80 (J. Anderson) More on the Aaron-Trianon case.

Other items of interest:

* 461. [3 pp.] Selective index to the end notes of "Crime and Cover-up" (Scott)
462. [22 pp.] Lists of account holders, Castle Bank
463. [10 pp., large print] Text of H.R. 5615, CIA names bill
464. [11 pp.] House Intelligence Committee report on H.R. 5615 [Cf. #435]

Queries:

Does anyone have "Syndicate Abroad," by Messick, to sell, lend, or copy?

Does anyone know the dates of the parts of the DeMohrenschildts' walking tour which involved Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua? (This was all April/May 1961, I think.) Approximate dates would help.

Is anyone interested in doing (or has anyone done) an FOIA request for FBI documents on Jesse Curry for the 5-10 years before 1963? Or a similar request on Chief Batchelor? Just the number of pages in the file might be helpful.

Credits: Thanks to M. Ewing (#432-7, 461, 463-4), M. Ferrell (414-6), P. Lambert (438), J. Marshall (462), G. Owens (439-40), R. Ranftel (441), and G. Shaw (418-426, 429-430).

"Oh Shut Up, Columbus" "Speak Up America," NBC's answer to People magazine, did a two-part item on the JFK case. Pretty bad. We've all had our problems with network TV news, but at least those people are journalists. When news becomes pure show biz, watch out! Marjoe Gortner is okay himself, but the whole approach of the show guarantees pure fluff, or worse. We got Mark Lane (in 1980) talking about how you can't fire 4 shots in 5.6 seconds, as if that were still the issue. I expected to hear him talk about Ruby's mother's teeth. There were cameo appearances by Marguerite Oswald, Eddowes, Gary Mack, Willis, Stokes, Marion Johnson holding the rifle, etc. The highlight was an exclusive interview with Garrison, presented as the first official to try to convict someone other than Oswald. He was said to have had eyewitnesses "who saw Shaw and his attorney give Oswald money"; Shaw was acquitted "but" a federal judge wouldn't let Big Jim try him for perjury; "However, Garrison did convict Shaw's attorney for perjury." Thus is history rewritten. Anyhow, Garrison says "extensions of the CIA in the [anti-Castro movement]" did it, with 3 teams shooting; if he were AG, he would arrest about 30 people. All this was interspersed by comments, generally uninformed, from random citizens. One citizen alleged that material was being withheld, so QUBE viewers in Columbus, Ohio were asked if "the information" on the assassination should be declassified. The instant response: 75% yes, 19% no, 6% no opinion. [I have a tape, and a 5-page paraphrase/partial transcript; ask for #465.]

P.S.: To get the acoustics news out, I'm sending most copies of this issue without a cover letter. For anyone expecting a letter or documents from me: I'll get to it soon.